

PARATYPE: Beside mule trail up the steep "Alto del Oso," just northeast of Cobugon, on the way to Laguna Seca, Sierra Nevada de Cocuy, Cordillera Oriental, Dept. Boyacá, Colombia; on peaty banks on steep, open hillside, alt. ca. 2900–3200 m, Aug. 18, 1957, *P. J. Grubb & D. A. Guymor P.68 (US)*. Duplicates are probably at BM and CGE. The collectors note that this species was never seen elsewhere.

The two known localities for *N. maxonii* are about 400 km distant and lie on a nearly east-west line in different mountain ranges. This species may well be rather widely distributed at high altitudes in northwestern Colombia, and, if so, has been overlooked, probably because of its small size and the difficulty of collecting in the cold, wet páramos.

It seems most likely that *Nephopteris* is a reduced offshoot of *Eriosorus*, for it resembles that genus far more than it does any of the genera related to *Eriosorus*. The sori, rhizome and frond indument, stipe coloration, and segment architecture of *N. maxonii* all agree with *Eriosorus*, but the dimorphic fronds that are not large and are neither scandent and indeterminate nor elongate and strongly pinnate are sufficient, in my opinion, to warrant separation of the two genera.

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Shorter Notes

SOUTHERN RECORDS OF *OPHIOGLOSSUM VULGATUM*.—In this JOURNAL, volume 56, p. 37, there is a report of what was presumed to be the first find of *Ophioglossum vulgatum* in Mississippi. However, on April 8, 1922, I was visiting in that state and chanced to enter a tract of moist pineland just east of Columbus, Lowndes County. Growing there in the subacid, humus-rich loam were two plants that I had seen not long before in a strikingly different environment—sphagnous meadowland in northern Vermont—namely, *Ophioglossum vulgatum* and the orchid *Listera australis*. Pressed specimens were duly placed in the U. S.

National Herbarium, but the record was not deemed worthy of publication at the time.

It is now realized that *O. vulgatum* is divisible into multiple infra-specific taxa, the two in the southeastern United States having been named var. *pseudopodium* and var. *pycnostichum*. These may of course be ignored by anyone who does not care to undertake the observation of minor details; but science would never advance if its devotees followed the path of least resistance. There is an indication that the contrasted morphologic features of these two varieties are correlated with geography, climate, soil character, etc., and so their separation does seem worth while.

My specimen (US 1,466,600) was kindly checked by Dr. Lelinger, who reports that while the blade-outline is somewhat intermediate, the plants correspond more closely to var. *pycnostichum*. It will accordingly be desirable to ascertain which variety is represented by the 1965 collection in the University of Mississippi herbarium. Interestingly enough, in the same number of the JOURNAL (p. 34) *O. vulgatum* is recorded from two widely separated stations in Lincoln Parish, Louisiana; again no varietal identification is indicated, but it should be made.

On turning to the recent *Ferns of Alabama*,¹ I noticed a curious mixup: in the text only var. *pycnostichum* is mentioned, but the illustration represents var. *pseudopodium*. Do both grow in Alabama or does this merely mean that the artist, not realizing the complexity of the situation, copied the figure from some book on the ferns of one of the northern states where var. *pseudopodium* grows?

Here, then, is an ecologic—geographic problem awaiting study: how far south does var. *pseudopodium* really extend, and is its apparent restriction to rather acid soils significant or may it sometimes enter the circumneutral soils which seem to favor the growth of var. *pycnostichum*?—EDGAR T. WHERRY, *Leidy Laboratory, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.*

¹Dean, Blanche E. *Ferns of Alabama and fern allies*. American Southern Publ. Co., Northport, Ala. 1964. xxiv + 232 pp. illustr. \$7.50.